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ABSTRACT

A 10-week practicum intervention was designed to improve second graders' spelling skills. A target group of five students who had exhibited difficulty in staying on-task and were performing a half-year below grade level was selected. Practicum goals were that 60 percent of target children would: (1) score at least 80 percent on spelling tests in the 9th and 10th weeks; (2) recognize, at least 80 percent of the time, a misspelled word that had been taken from a spelling list and used in 10 sentences; and (3) demonstrate more positive attitudes toward spelling. The intervention consisted of the implementation of a spelling program that focused on the interweaving of traditional methods of teaching spelling, modality-based instruction, the use of computers, and a whole language approach. Students used spelling words in journals, creative stories, sentences, and poems. Computer activities designed to aid visual memory of spelling words and heighten student motivation were made available. Comparison of pre- and posttest evaluation data indicated that students' achievement in spelling and attitudes toward spelling improved. All practicum goals were attained and exceeded. It is concluded that the success of the program shows that spelling must have a meaningful and motivational purpose in students' daily work. Related materials, including the spelling attitude survey, are appended. (RH)

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# DEVELOPING A SPELLING PROGRAM FOR LOW-FUNCTIONING SECOND GRADE STUDENTS

by

Brenda L. Houghton

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A Practicum Report

Submitted to the Faculty of the Center for the Advancement of Education at Nova University in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science.

The abstract of this report may be placed in a National Database System for reference.

August 1990

## Authorship Statement

I hereby testify that this paper and the work it reports are entirely my own. Where it has been necessary to draw from the work of others, published or unpublished, I have acknowledged such work in accordance with accepted scholarly and editorial practice. I give this testimony freely, out of respect for the scholarship of other workers in the field and in the hope that my work, presented here, will earn similar respect.

Signed Brenda L. Houghton

## Abstract

Developing A Spelling Program for Low-Functioning Second Grade Students.
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Descriptors: Elementary Education/Learning Styles/Multisensory Learning/Whole Language/Computer Education/Spelling/Low-Functioning Primary Students/Proofreading Spelling Words in Context/Spelling List Words/Correct Spelling in Writing/Modality-Based Instruction/SpellingInstruction/Phonics/WritingComposition/Writing Skills

The author addressed the problem of developing a spelling program for low-functioning second grade students. A pretest and posttest of spelling list words, spelling in the context of given sentences (Appendix D:58), and a spelling attitude survey (Appendix A:55) were used to measure spelling achievement and attitudes before and after the implementation of the project. The spelling program focuses on the interweaving of the traditional methods of teaching spelling, modality-based instruction, the use of computers, and a whole language approach. The results proved that student achievement and attitudes in spelling increased through the use of motivational activities. Appendices include a student spelling attitude survey, a spelling growth chart, a self-correcting column paper, and the spelling context test.

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Center For The Advancement of Education
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Fort Lauderdale, FL 33314

Observer Verification Form

Verification of Practicum Activity

Dear Observer:

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Practicum Title Developing a Spelling Program for Low-functioning Second Grade Students

Student's Name Brenda L. Houghton

Program Site Bradenton Date June 8, 1990

Observer's Name JOHN A. LORENCH J. A. Lorench
(please print---------and sign)

Observer's position PRINCIPAL - ASHTON ELEM Phone # 922-0704

Observer's comment on impact of the project (handwritten):

Mrs. Houghton was observed conducting a lesson to improve spelling. The children were engaged in the wide variety of provided 30 minute activities. Improved test scores were noted with this target group of children.

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# CHAPTER I

## Purpose

The setting for this practicum was an elementary school with a population of 550 students in grades one to five. The community from which the students come is characterized by lower, middle, and upper-middle socio-economic groups. The teachers implement a teaming approach within an open classroom setting. The use of parent volunteers and student interns is greatly encouraged. Students are grouped according to individual reading and math abilities.

The school's philosophy is student-centered. The staff works hard to recognize the uniqueness of each student and to solve individual student problems. A complete Exceptional Student Education (ESE) department is housed at the school.

The writer was responsible for teaching 28 second grade students who were all working on a first grade reading level as measured by the Ginn Reading Test. Nine students had been identified as Specific Learning Disabled (SLD), one student was identified as Emotionally Handicapped (EH), one student was Hearing Impaired (HI), and two students attended Language, Speech, and Hearing (LSH) classes. The writer taught all subject areas to the homogeneous classroom. Language arts was taught two hours daily.

For the purpose of the study, the writer focused on a target group of five students. The students had not been identified as eligible for placement in the ESE program and had not been retained. The group consisted of one Black boy, three Caucasian boys, and one Black girl. Two Black students received free breakfast and lunch. All five students came from two-parent homes where both parents worked. The parents of all five students had shown some interest and concern about the students' performance in the classroom. Handwritten notes received from one Black student's parent revealed many misspelled words and incorrect sentence structure, perhaps due to the cultural dialect.

All five students had difficulty staying on-task. Four students had difficulty finishing all assigned work without direct supervision from the teacher. Four students showed difficulty with organizational skills; i.e., losing books, forgetting homework, and accumulating papers and unfinished assignments in desks. Papers were often messy and recklessly completed. Two students communicated well orally and in written stories. Three students struggled with verbal communication and demonstrated language difficulty in writing. All five students rode the bus to and from school and arrived on time each day. Each of the five students had a good attendance record. All five students enjoyed school and

wanted to please the teacher. All liked to help in the classroom and responded to rewards.

The writer observed and documented that the second grade students in this practicum were performing one-half year below grade level in spelling. Given a list of 10 dictated words from the spelling textbook to learn, the target group failed to score 80 percent on weekly tests. The target county guidelines require an 80 percent score each week to show mastery of the 10 dictated list words. The average score of the five target students was 64 percent on the weekly spelling list test. There was an average discrepancy gap of 16 percent.

Table 1

Number of Words Misspelled on
Weekly Spelling List Test

| Student # | Week #1 | Week #2 | Week #3 | Week #4 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 3 | 6 | 4 | 3 |
| 2 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 3 | 5 | 3 | 5 | 4 |
| 4 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 2 |
| 5 | 5 | 3 | 3 | 4 |
| Subtotals | 19 | 18 | 18 | 17 |
| Average # Missed | 3.8 | 3.6 | 3.6 | 3.4 |
| Average % Correct | 62 | 64 | 64 | 66 |

Average Grade Percentage Overall = 64

When asked to recognize if 10 spelling words were spelled correctly or incorrectly in the context of 10 given sentences, the target students scored an average of 66.5 percent. As previously mentioned, the target county guidelines require a score of 80 percent each week to show mastery of the spelling words. There was an average discrepancy gap of 13.5 percent.

Table 2

Number of Words Misspelled on Weekly Spelling Context Test

| Student # | Week #1 | Week #2 | Week #3 | Week #4 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 5 | 2 | 3 |
| 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 5 |
| 3 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 2 |
| 4 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 |
| 5 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 4 |
| Subtotals | 14 | 19 | 17 | 17 |
| Average # Missed | 2.8 | 3.8 | 3.4 | 3.4 |
| Average % Correct | 72 | 62 | 66 | 66 |

Average Grade Percentage Overall = 66.5

Problems encountered by the group in this practicum may have originated from poorly developed language skills. Review of cumulative folders and last year's report card grades in spelling and written communication indicated low achievement in language development. Results of the Ginn level 5 and level 6 reading tests

verified that the five target students were all functioning one-half year below grade level (2.5) in language and reading.

Table 3

Ginn Reading Scores

| Student # | Level 5 (1.0) | Level 6 (1.5) |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | 85% | 87% |
| 2 | 83% | 83% |
| 3 | 87% | 90% |
| 4 | 85% | 87% |
| 5 | 71% | 83% |

Table 4

Report Card Grades for Spelling and Written Communication Based on One-Half Year Below Grade Level

| Student # | Grade 1 Spelling | Grade 1 WC* | Grade 2 Spelling | Grade 2 WC* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | C | D | C | C |
| 2 | B | C | C | C |
| 3 | D | D | C | C |
| 4 | B | C | C | C |
| 5 | D | C | D | C |

*WC = Written Communication

After discussing the target group's individual reading test scores, spelling test scores, and report card grades with former teachers, the writer discovered additional possible causes for low spelling achievement. All of the former teachers reported that the spelling textbook was boring; however, the county guidelines recommend the use of the adopted spelling series. The textbook lacked stimulating activities that could be easily implemented in the classroom. All former teachers stated spelling was not an interesting subject to teach, and poor teacher attitudes toward spelling had developed. Very little time was devoted to spelling instruction because other subject areas were thought to have more importance in students' lives.

The former teachers were asked what methods were used to teach spelling. Many teachers favored methods reflecting personal modality strengths rather than a variety of learning styles. Six teachers admitted to having no training in the methods of spelling instruction and merely relied on the textbook approach or used the old traditional methods of teaching isolated spelling words from a list. Many teachers felt restricted teaching one list of spelling words to an entire class of heterogeneously-grouped students. All former teachers communicated a need for more flexibility and experimentation in the spelling program. Former teachers did not supplement the spelling textbook with personal ideas due to lack of

time in the school day. None of the former teachers had adapted a daily writing program utilizing spelling words.

The writer concluded that former methods of teaching spelling were ineffective. A more meaningful approach to teaching spelling was necessary. Spelling textbooks were boring to teachers and stifled creativity.

Poor attitudes were verified by a teacher-made attitude survey (Appendix A:55). The attitude survey indicated little student interest in spelling or the activities that include spelling. On a scale of one to three, at least an average score of two on all questions should be expected of the second grade student. The target group scored an average of 1.1. There was a discrepancy gap of .9.

Table 5

Spelling Attitude Survey Results

| Question | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Student | | | | | | | | | | | Average Score |
| 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1.1 |
| 2 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 1.4 |
| 3 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1.0 |
| 4 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1.2 |
| 5 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1.0 |
| Average Overall Score = | | | | | | | | | | | 1.1 |

Poor student attitudes could have been directly related to poor teacher attitudes, boring textbooks, and the traditional isolated methods used to teach spelling by former teachers.

The writer concluded that the five target students had a discrepancy gap of one-half year below grade level in reading and language as indicated on the Ginn reading scores. Report card grades and weekly spelling tests indicated below grade level achievement in spelling and written communication. All five students in the study demonstrated poor attitudes toward spelling and activities including spelling.

The problem addressed in this practicum was to develop a spelling program which would improve scores on the spelling list test closing the existing average 16 percent discrepancy gap, improve scores on the spelling context test closing the existing average 13.5 percent discrepancy gap, and improve student attitudes by closing the existing average .9 discrepancy gap.

The writer had three outcome objectives which were to be achieved by the end of the 10-week practicum project.

1. Sixty percent of the target group would score at least 80 percent on the weekly spelling tests during implementation weeks 9 and 10 using a dictated list of 10 words taken from the spelling textbook.

2. Sixty percent of the target group would recognize a misspelled word taken from the spelling list and used in the context of 10 given sentences 80 percent of the time, as measured by teacher scoring for weeks 9 and 10 of implementation using selected sentences as an evaluation tool.
3. Sixty percent of the target group would demonstrate more positive attitudes toward spelling as evidenced by two additional positive responses on a teacher-made attitude survey on the approach to work and the student's personal feelings.

## CHAPTER II

## Research and Solution Strategy

Of all subjects in the elementary schools, spelling is one area of the curriculum most frequently studied. "Spelling as a subject ranks just below reading and mathematics as a national priority as shown in a survey given to parents in the United States." (Graves 1983:133). Most schools emphasize reading programs and place little emphasis on spelling. Many teachers are not knowledgeable of the latest trends in spelling. Therefore, most teachers rely on traditional methods of teaching spelling rather than on research results. Educators, both locally and nationally, stated three specific problems related to poor spelling in the classroom. These problems are: (1) textbooks, (2) methods of teaching spelling, and (3) motivation and attitudes. For changes to occur in spelling performance and attitudes, these problems must be addressed and solutions implemented (Graves, 1983).

The first problem, textbooks, was addressed by Cohen, as cited by Barbe, Francis, and Braun (1982). Cohen examined the effectiveness of nine spelling texts. Two approaches were compared in the study: word analysis used in spelling textbooks and word usage outside the spelling textbook. Cohen found that students spell better when using the spelling words in an exercise that has

a direct purpose. Seventy-two spelling words out of 81 were successfully spelled using the word-usage approach. Nine of those words were spelled correctly using exercises from the spelling textbook. This study also proved that the word-usage approach assisted the good speller as well as the poor speller.

Since the Cohen research, Barbe, Francis and Braun (1982) have completed an updated survey of nine spelling books. Many word analysis exercises were still found in spelling textbooks. An increase in word usage activities and language arts skills was discovered.

> Commercial texts are the foundation of spelling activity for most pupils. That is, most of the spelling exercises, word lists, and approaches used to develop spellers are determined by published spelling materials. . . . The Cohen data, as well as the update on current spelling book practices, point to the need for re-evaluation of spelling books and their contents. If books are to be used, more usage and application of spelling words is needed. (Graves, as cited by Barbe, Francis, and Braun 1982:30,33).

Distefano and Hagerty (1985:373), stated that:

> In probably no other area in language arts is there such a discrepancy between what we know and what we teach as in spelling. Most elementary schools use spelling series and treat spelling as a subject separate from the other language arts. The spelling series dictates what words to teach without regard to children's language and background experiences.

In a study by Hafstrom (1988), the question of whether spelling could be taught more effectively through a holistic writing approach versus traditional instructional textbook approaches was conducted.

A target group of second grade students was given daily spelling textbook lessons Monday through Thursday, with a weekly pretest on Monday and a posttest on Friday. The study was conducted over a six-week period. The same target group was then instructed in spelling through a holistic writing approach for another six-week period. The students wrote every day for 30 to 45 minutes without any formal study of spelling words. The students were given the freedom to use invented spelling and encouraged to look up misspellings in a dictionary. Many of the writings were published. The results of Hafstrom's study showed that neither instruction in spelling using a holistic writing approach nor the traditional textbook approach significantly increased spelling scores. However, the study did indicate that spelling instruction using a holistic writing approach significantly increased by 50 percent the willingness of second graders to attempt the spelling of unfamiliar words.

In conclusion, this study revealed that a holistic spelling program can increase the confidence a student develops when attempting to spell unfamiliar words.

Hodges (1981:11,12) asserted that:

> Spelling instruction cannot be restricted to the study of the relationship of letters with sounds, but demands an active involvement with both spoken and written language if students are to gain a functional understanding of the nature and uses of English spelling. Learning to spell, like learning to speak, is a developmental process. . . .

> Because spelling is a language-based activity that involves many of the same intellectual and linguistic processes that are used in verbal communications, spelling should be taught in the context of general language study. Spelling instruction should provide children with opportunities to explore the ways in which their knowledge of spoken language relates to writing and how to apply that knowledge in spelling. Learning to spell is complex enough to warrant the kind of formal study that many commercial and school district spelling programs provide. At the same time, spelling instruction should not be confined to such programs. . . . Every writing situation has the potential to further the young student's knowledge about written language.

Barbe, Francis, and Braun (1982) reported that textbooks are not a necessity but a convenience for teachers to take advantage of. Teachers have become dissatisfied with basal spelling texts. Many teachers prefer to develop original spelling lists and spelling programs that evolve around other subjects.

Barbe, Francis, and Braun (1982:14,2) stated that:

> Teachers should have no reservations about using a well-designed textbook as the basis of their spelling instruction. They should also feel free to supplement the contents of the book with materials offered by other publishers or developed by themselves. The more variety that teachers can bring to the spelling curriculum, the more likely it is that students will become good spellers. . . . The major problem with spelling series is that teachers rely too heavily on them. Spelling books are only tools. They do not teach spelling -- teachers do.

The second problem addressed is the methods used to teach spelling. Many different teaching methods can be found focusing on how students learn to spell. One of the most controversial is the list method. This method is based on a list of high frequency words

that students need in daily writing. Students are usually presented the list of words on Monday and tested on the words each Friday.

Storie and Willems (1988) reported that one of the essential elements of a solid spelling curriculum is a list of high frequency words. When spelling words are introduced and tested in a list form, the rate of success is much greater than when spelling words are tested in the context of a sentence or paragraph. Horn, as cited by Storie and Willems (1988), emphasized that lists of words can be studied and learned more easily. Lists of spelling words are retained longer and the application in context is effortless. Words introduced in list form are easier to concentrate on because the student focuses on each individual word.

Johnson, Longford, and Quorn (1981) supported the idea that words introduced in a list form are learned easier than words introduced in context. The spelling list should consist of words used frequently by spellers. A daily writing program should be developed for application and retention of these words.

Barbe, Francis, and Braun (1982) cited the studies of Gates and Horn. Gates' research proved that the test-study-test method of teaching spelling is superior to the study-test-study method. This method advocates the use of a spelling list. A pretest and a posttest are used for evaluation. The importance of a pretest in spelling instruction is evidenced by positive attitudes and

increased spelling achievement. However, Horn's studies showed that the corrected-test method is the most effective method contributing to spelling achievement. The students are required to correct spelling errors under the teacher's supervision. This method of teaching spelling was proven to account for 90 to 95 percent of students' achievement.

The most recent research in the methods of teaching spelling indicated that students are more likely to spell correctly when the spelling words are used in daily writing programs.

> Most students will learn to spell when they have a reason for wanting someone else to read their work. Probably the greatest aid to developing spelling consciousness is a curriculum which includes frequent writing, thereby creating many opportunities for using words and many opportunities for evaluating their accuracy. Squire (1987:23).

Graves (1983) found that spelling must serve a meaningful purpose in students' lives. When a student composes, both proficiency in reading and writing help the student to become a better speller. Proficiency in spelling is essential so that the student can focus on the information to be conveyed rather than spending time and energy on how a word should be spelled. When a student builds confidence as a good speller, pride develops in the written work.

The Department of Education (1988:2,4,5) reported:

Many reading professionals believe that changes in teaching methods that integrate all of the language arts are essential to the growing demands for education in the twenty-first century. . . . There is a recent trend, supported by a growing body of research toward "whole language" approaches to language arts and reading instruction. The problems inherent in diagnostic-prescriptive, skill-based, fragmented reading and language arts instruction has begun to generate a change in both methods and philosophy of language arts instruction in the elementary grades. The isolation of the elements of language instruction into separate strands of reading, spelling, grammar, and composition has frequently been ineffective. . . . The movement towards a "whole language" approach has been rapid, sweeping across the English-speaking world in less than a decade. The trend has been surprisingly powerful, considering the general conservatism of education.

Fehring, as cited by Jenkins (1986:37) stated that:

This (an integrated language) approach takes the view that language encompasses talking, listening, reading, writing, and spelling and that these should be seen as an integrated whole rather than as isolated skills. . . . Teachers need to be aware that spelling development occurs simultaneously with writing development. Spelling cannot be treated as an isolated subskill or just a tool for writing. . . . Children, who when working with words integrate meaning, pronunciation, usage and the orthography of words, will build up cognitive networks that will enhance their ability to utilize information from all these language strategies when it comes to the spelling process.

Turner (1984:3) reported that:

Spelling and writing belong together. To keep spelling away from writing is to deprive children of the relevance, the experimentation that leads to discovery and constant practice in an interesting situation that leads to learning. It is a tragedy if children grow to avoid any form of writing just because they think they are "bad" spellers. Learning spelling separately from writing must be like learning music theory without playing music. What's the point and where's the enjoyment?

Goodman, Goodman, and Hood (1989) cited Hull's study of a whole language approach to spelling, whereby the teacher kept a file on each first grade student with sample writing activities. One writing sample was taken at the beginning of the school year, a second writing sample was taken in the middle of the school year, and a third writing sample was taken at the end of the school year. Through a comparison study of each writing sample, Hull witnessed a dramatic improvement toward conventional spelling. The students were learning to spell in the context of writing and reading.

Students dislike writing because spelling is difficult. Spelling is often the obstacle that makes writing a drudgery. If the student is allowed to pick an interesting topic to write on, self-esteem rises and visual memory improves; therefore, spelling will improve. Students will become confident and proud about writing. When students cannot spell, access to information is lost. Wrestling with spelling words breaks fluency. Students are continuously rereading in order to gain control of the composition. Students will frequently hide papers or incompleted work in the back of desks because the appearance and inability to spell inhibits a pleasing final product. If proficient motivated spellers is the goal, daily meaningful writing is essential (Graves, 1983).

A popular method used to teach spelling is modality-based instruction, whereby the teacher designs lessons around students'

learning strengths which could be any of the sensory channels including visual, auditory, and kinesthetic. Since modality-based instruction is centered around students' strengths, learning is not only increased but motivation rises. This leads to the final problem--lack of motivation and lack of positive attitudes toward spelling.

Barbe and Swassing (1979) found that teaching to modality strengths is a powerful motivational tool; therefore, the probability of success increases. Modality-based instruction insures a student's success because progression takes place at the individual's own rate.

> The need for acquiring isolated and perhaps irrelevant skills is eliminated and application rather than mere understanding is emphasized. . . .Since modality-based instruction is strength-oriented, teachers can expect students to learn rapidly and enjoy doing it. (Barbe and Swassing, 1979:33).

Specialists on child development believe studerts learn more and interest rises when teaching methods meet special modality strengths. The single most important factor of a nontraditional approach is hands-on learning. Swiss psychologist Piaget pioneered the research that indicated younger students between the ages of six and nine learn more and are highly motivated when a multi-sensory approach to learning is implemented versus just a listening approach (Kantrowitz and Wingert, 1989).

Many researchers have begun to rely on classroom computers to aid in the motivational teaching of spelling. Research has shown that a spelling word presented visually on a computer screen produces a higher level of recall as well as entertaining practice for students.

> Many spelling textbooks and exercises refer to "Spelling Fun" in their titles. Now there is every opportunity for spelling to be fun indeed with teacher-assisted computer use and computer-assisted spelling practice. (Nolen, 1980:542).

A study was conducted by Hall and Bialozor (1989) investigating the effects of a computer-assisted drill and practice program for spelling instruction. The study compared the traditional spelling program with that of a computer-assisted program. The targeted group consisted of 6 fourth and 6 sixth grade special education students. The study was conducted for one school year. The students were taught in a regular classroom for traditional spelling instruction for part of the spelling units. A self-corrected pretest was given on Monday. Tuesday through Thursday the students practiced spelling words using textbooks, spelling games and oral recitation. Friday a posttest was given and recorded. For the remaining spelling units, the targeted group practiced spelling words twice a week using the microcomputer in addition to the traditional classroom instruction. The overall results showed that the targeted group achieved higher spelling scores when the

computer-assisted instruction was added to the traditional spelling program. The instructor noted that students who had been behavior problems were able to stay on-task when working at the computer. Self-confidence and self-esteem improved. Spelling became one of the most successful experiences of the school day.

McClendon (1989) conducted a study with low-achieving first grade students. The first half of the year spelling was taught using a traditional program. The second half of the school year spelling was taught using a combination of traditional instruction and the computer. Spelling was taught four days a week. Once the computer was added to the spelling program, McClendon reported 16 of 18 students received 100 percent each week through the end of the school year. A dramatic improvement was observed in the attitudes of students toward spelling.

> The combination of verbal, visual, tactile, and written cues was most successful in raising the grades of the lowest achieving students, most of whom had previously shown a significant difference in their achievement test spelling scores and their academic success in spelling. I noticed positive feelings about spelling with keyboarding were profound with all students in class. (McClendon, 1989:36).

Outhred (1989) conducted a study examining the effects of using a word processor on the creative writing of 15 learning disabled children ages 8 to 12 years. The children wrote two stories each week for 21 school weeks. One story was written on the word processor and one was handwritten. The two stories were compared

for fluency and misspelling. Misspellings were included because a recent study supported evidence that words formed on the monitor closely resembled those found in reading books. The results of the study revealed the length of students' stories increased and using the word processor decreased the spelling errors made by eight students with the most severe spelling problems. Misspellings made in the stories on the word processor decreased by an average of 8.3 percent. The study concluded that the word processor may be of great benefit for improving spelling, increasing confidence in writing, and restoring a willingness to show neat, legible stories.

Graham and Miller, as cited by Barbe, Francis, and Braun (1982) suggested that another method used to motivate students and build positive attitudes toward spelling is the extrinsic use of charts, graphs, and material rewards. It is important that students chart individual progress. Once students have experienced success and are rewarded concretely, the extrinsic techniques can be slowly replaced with intrinsic attitudes toward spelling.

> Of all the sources available to the teacher for promoting positive attitudes, probably none other is as important as the student's awareness of progress or success (E. Horn, 1960). . . .To minimize the effects of persistent failure, the teacher should dramatize each student success using charts, graphs, verbal praise, and so on. The experience of noting progress may be motivating for both student and teacher. . . .The teacher may have to build into the spelling program rewards for good performance. Studies by Benowitz and Busse (1970, 1976), Benowitz and Rosenfeld (1973), and Thompson and Galloway (1970) reveal that

> material incentives are successful in improving spelling achievement. (Barbe, Francis, and Braun, 1982:311, 312).

Students must develop positive attitudes toward spelling to improve spelling achievement. The teacher must develop techniques that will enhance the intrinsic growth of attitudes. The student must want to spell successfully and understand the importance of spelling.

In view of all the research presented in this practicum, the writer's solutions and strategies to improving spelling in the classroom focused on the interweaving of the traditional methods of teaching spelling with modality-based instruction and the recent trend toward a "whole language" approach. This systematic spelling program took place 30 minutes per day, five days a week over a 10-week period.

The writer was held accountable for traditional weekly test scores in spelling achievement. Therefore, the writer presented spelling words used frequently by students in a list form rather than sentences or paragraphs as suggested by Storie and Willems (1988). To save time and energy, the spelling word list was taken from the adapted spelling textbook. As recommended by Barbe, Francis, and Braun (1982), the textbook was used only as a tool and was creatively adapted and supplemented.

The corrected-test method, proven by research as one of the most important factors contributing to spelling achievement, was

implemented. A pretest was given on Monday with self-corrections made by students. The students were provided time to study misspelled words and use the words in practice activities. Students compared pretest results with final test results as recommended by Barbe, Francis, and Braun, 1982. The students took a posttest on Fridays as an evaluation tool. The teacher corrected the test. The research study of Graham and Miller, as cited by Barbe, Francis, and Braun (1982), suggested that students record individual progress on a graph or chart to promote positive attitudes. Therefore, students recorded performance grades on individual spelling growth charts. (Appendix B:56). The students were also tested on each spelling word written in the context of a given sentence. The students recognized words spelled correctly or incorrectly. This test was graded by the teacher and the results were recorded by the student on individual spelling growth charts.

Research has proven that modality-based instruction aids in motivation, integration, and application of isolated skills. The writer provided visual, auditory and kinesthetic activities in learning centers to stimulate achievement and arouse interest as suggested by Kantrowitz and Wingert (1989).

The research study of McClendon (1989), directly links spelling success with the use of computers. Therefore, computer activities were made available to aid in visual memory of the spelling words

and heighten student motivation. The student's print-out of the spelling words was sent home to study.

An integrated, whole language approach was achieved through the use of various writing assignments. Research proves that frequent opportunities to use spelling words in writing contribute to long-term spelling success. The students used the spelling words in journal writings, creative stories, sentences, and poems as recommended by Goodman, Goodman, and Hood, (1989).

Research supports the use of rewards to improve spelling achievement, as recommended by Graham and Miller, cited by Barbe, Francis, and Braun (1982). To encourage achievement and motivation, the students received a certificate of recognition when a score of 80 percent or higher on both tests was achieved. Students receiving 100 percent on both tests were awarded a certificate of recognition and a free recess.

At the end of the 10-week implementation period, the writer re-administered the attitude survey. This survey served as an evaluation tool to determine the success of the solutions and strategies outlined in this practicum upon student motivation and student attitudes toward spelling.

## CHAPTER III

## Methodology

The following implementation plan was used over a 10-week period to improve spelling proficiency. This plan was directed at the targeted group for a 30-minute period each day.

Week 1

Monday - Pretest

The teacher pronounced 10 words as the target students wrote the words. The words were written in columns with a column on the right for self-correcting procedures (Appendix C:57). The following spelling words were used: (1) one, (2) two, (3) three, (4) four, (5) five, (6) six, (7) seven, (8) eight, (9) nine, (10) ten.

1. The teacher pronounced each word three times: in isolation, in a sentence, and again in isolation.
2. Immediately following the pretest, the teacher spelled aloud and wrote each word on the chalkboard or used the overhead projector.
3. The target group wrote the corrected spelling in the column beside each misspelled word.
4. The target group counted the number of words spelled correctly and each student placed the pretest in individual spelling folders.

Tuesday - Modality-Based Activities

The teacher provided a visual, an auditory, and a kinesthetic activity in learning centers to stimulate individual learning styles and increase motivation.

Visual Activity - Concentration Game

Students wrote each spelling word on two cards. Students shuffled the cards face down. Students took turns revealing the pairs that matched. Students spelled the word without looking to keep the cards. The student with the most matches won.

Auditory Activity - Spelling Bee

The teacher pronounced each spelling word aloud. Students spelled each word aloud while writing it on a small chalkboard.

Kinesthetic Activity - Tablets of Clay

Students flattened a ball of clay into a tablet. Using a pencil or paper clip end, students wrote each spelling word in the clay.

Wednesday - Computer Exercise

The teacher pronounced spelling words as the target group typed out each word on the computer. The teacher said the word, used the word in a sentence and said the word again.

Students self-corrected each word as the teacher spelled words aloud and wrote words on the chalkboard.

Students retyped misspelled words on the computer. The target group printed out the practice test for home study.

Thursday - Written Activity

The target group wrote stories, poems or creative sentences in journals.

Friday - Posttest

The teacher pronounced each word three times. The teacher said the word; used the word in a sentence; then said the word again. Students wrote each word.

The target group was tested on each of the spelling words written in the context of a sentence. Students were asked to recognize whether the word was spelled correctly or incorrectly (Appendix D:58).

The teacher graded the test. Students recorded performance grades on individual charts.

Students scoring 80 percent or higher on both tests received a certificate of recognition. Students scoring 100 percent on both tests were awarded a certificate and an extra recess.

Week 2

The following spelling words were used: (1) boats, (2) birds, (3) girls, (4) boys, (5) eggs, (6) boxes, (7) foxes, (8) wishes, (9) dishes, (10) glasses.

Week 1 activities were repeated.

At the end of the first two weeks, the target students felt very special being placed in a separate group for spelling center activities. Each day a new activity was introduced the students became verbally excited. The students cheered when the concentration game was introduced. Most of the students were familiar with the game but had never associated it with learning spelling words. All of the students reported to the writer that the game had been played with parents that week. The writer had to collect several of the games from the students until daily work was completed because the game was being playing during inappropriate work times.

The computer activity was a favorite. The target group had never used the word processor and became very excited watching the spelling words print out. The writer opened the printer cover so the students could actually see the spelling words being printed.

The writer was especially surprised at the enthusiasm verbalized by the students when asked to use the spelling words in writings. The target group experienced difficulty getting words on paper so most of the allotted time was used to verbalize ideas for stories or poems incorporating the weekly spelling words. The writer experienced frustration with only allowing 30 minutes for this activity.

Week 3

Monday - Pretest

The teacher pronounced 10 words as the target students wrote the words. The words were written in columns with a column on the right for self-correcting procedures. The following spelling words were used: (1) looking, (2) played, (3) asked, (4) filled, (5) talking, (6) jumping, (7) needed, (8) planted, (9) spelling, (10) walked.

1. The teacher pronounced each word three times: in isolation, in a sentence, and again in isolation.
2. Immediately following the pretest, the teacher spelled aloud and wrote each word on the chalkboard or used the overhead projector.
3. The target group wrote the corrected spelling in the column beside each misspelled word.
4. The target group counted the number of words spelled correctly and each student placed the pretest in individual spelling folders.

Tuesday - Modality-Based Activities

Visual Activity - Magnetic Letters

Students spelled each word from the spelling list using magnetic letters. The teacher took one or more of the letters away. Students told what was missing and replaced the letters correctly.

Auditory Activity - Tape Recorder

Students said each spelling word into the tape recorder. The tape was played back while students wrote each word as it was pronounced. Each student self-checked the words.

Kinesthetic Activity - Black and White

Students wrote the spelling words using a white crayon on a piece of manilla paper. A black paint-wash was painted over the spelling words leaving the white words showing through.

Wednesday - Computer Exercise

The teacher pronounced spelling words as the target group typed out each word on the computer. The teacher said the word, used the word in a sentence and said the word again.

Students self-corrected each word as the teacher spelled the words aloud and wrote the words on the chalkboard.

Students retyped the misspelled words on the computer. The target group printed out the practice test for home study.

Thursday - Written Activity

The target group wrote stories, poems or creative sentences in journals.

Friday - Posttest

The teacher pronounced each word three times. The teacher said the word; used the word in a sentence; then said the word again. Students wrote each word.

The target group was tested on each of the spelling words written in the context or a sentence. Students were asked to recognize whether the word was spelled correctly or incorrectly.

The teacher graded the test. Students recorded performance grades on individual charts.

Students scoring 80 percent or higher on both tests received a certificate of recognition. Students scoring 100 percent on both tests were awarded a certificate and an extra recess.

Week 4

The following spelling words were used: (1) good, (2) wood, (3) wool, (4) took, (5) book, (6) too, (7) food, (8) noon, (9) boot, (10) root.

Week 3 activities were repeated.

The target students were excited to hear the explanations about the new spelling center activities. The tape recorder activity was a favorite. Many of the target students had never operated a tape recorder nor heard another student's voice on tape. The students also enjoyed doing the black paint-wash activity. Many of the target group were amazed that the spelling words would still show through after painting over the words.

The students verbally expressed enthusiasm about using the computer again. When asked to put the spelling words in a poem, all the students begged to put the poems on the computer. During week

4, the writer introduced the writing activity on Wednesday and the students printed the writing activity on the computer on Thursday in place of the usual computer exercise. The writer found this change much more meaningful. The writer again felt frustration when blocked into a 30-minute time frame.

Week 5

Monday - Pretest

The teacher pronounced 10 words as the target students wrote the words. The words were written in columns with a column on the right for self-correcting procedures. The following spelling words were used: (1) her, (2) put, (3) from, (4) want, (5) any, (6) many, (7) off, (8) out, (9) who, (10) saw.

1. The teacher pronounced each word three times: in isolation, in a sentence, and again in isolation.
2. Immediately following the pretest, the teacher spelled aloud and wrote each word on the chalkboard or used the overhead projector.
3. The target group wrote the corrected spelling in the column beside each misspelled word.
4. The target group counted the number of words spelled correctly and each student placed the pretest in individual spelling folders.

Tuesday - Modality-Based Activities

Visual Activity - Crayon Outline

Students wrote each spelling word with a crayon. Students chose a different color crayon and traced over the word again. Students continued until three different colors were used on each spelling word.

Auditory Activity - Friend to Friend

A student dictated the spelling test to another student. Students checked together, then switched roles.

Kinesthetic Activity - Sand and Glue

Students wrote each spelling word with glue, then sprinkled sand over the glue. When paper was dry, students traced over letters and spelled words aloud.

Wednesday - Computer Exercise

The teacher pronounced spelling words as the target group typed out each word on the computer. The teacher said the word, used the word in a sentence and said the word again.

Students self-corrected each word as the teacher spelled words aloud and wrote words on the chalkboard.

Students retyped misspelled words on the computer. The target group printed out the practice test for home study.

Thursday - Written Activity

The target group wrote stories, poems or creative sentences in journals.

Friday - Posttest

The teacher pronounced each word three times. The teacher said the word; used the word in a sentence; then said the word again. Students wrote each word.

The target group was tested on each of the spelling words written in the context or a sentence. Students were asked to recognize whether the word was spelled correctly or incorrectly.

The teacher graded the test. Students recorded performance grades on individual charts.

Students scoring 80 percent or higher on both tests received a certificate of recognition. Students scoring 100 percent on both tests were awarded a certificate and an extra recess.

If students were achieving at least 80 percent on the weekly Friday posttests at this time in the implementation period, the teacher could choose to reduce the number of spelling words from 10 to 7. The 30-minute time allotted for activities could be increased, if needed.

Week 6

The following spelling words were used: (1) new, (2) blew, (3) flew, (4) grew, (5) how, (6) now, (7) cow, (8) down, (9) town, (10) clown.

Week 5 activities were repeated.

The writer discovered that the target students worked well together in pairs when asked to perform the friend-to-friend activity. The students were most enthusiastic when dictating the words. Many students modeled the procedure for dictating the spelling words that the writer had incorporated. The sand and glue activity, although messy, was very popular. The writer observed most students saying each letter aloud as the letter was formed with the glue. All five students experienced some difficulty establishing equal space for each word because there were no lines for guiding distance or size. Most students needed two pieces of paper to write all ten spelling words. The writer was surprised that the target group still exhibited excitement when the writing and computer exercises were introduced. Once again students chose to compose stories on Wednesday using the assigned spelling words and print the stories out on the computer on Thursday in place of the original computer activity.

The writer and students continued to feel frustrated working with a 30-minute time frame. To alleviate this problem, the writer

increased the daily spelling center time to 45 minutes and integrated the spelling activities that did not require direct teacher assistance into the students' total language arts program. The students were now able to independently complete the writing activities on Wednesday and the computer printing of the writing activities on Thursday in addition to the daily assigned work. The students' stories and journal writings were much longer and more creative during weeks 5 and 6. Although the students did misspell some words in the stories and poems, the assigned spelling words were always spelled correctly. The writer did note that all five target students made an attempt to either look up the spelling of a word in the dictionary or ask someone for help.

The importance of spelling seemed to be enhanced by the use of the computer. Because the final writing activities were published on the computer, the students began to place significant importance on the appearance of the paper. The writer witnessed a higher level of spelling consciousness developing within the five target students. The students expressed pride in spelling accomplishments. Although the use of extrinsic rewards was still very valuable in motivating the students, the writer observed that intrinsic rewards were evident in the attitudes and behaviors toward the spelling activities. The students were becoming very competitive as to how many perfect spelling scores had been earned. Each student

collected and displayed certificates of recognition on a personal bulletin board space. Due to the success of the spelling program thus far, the writer did not see a need to reduce the number of spelling words at this time of the implementation period.

Week 7

Monday - Pretest

The teacher pronounced 10 words as the target students wrote the words. The words were written in columns with a column on the right for self-correcting procedures. The following spelling words were used: (1) color, (2) red, (3) white, (4) blue, (5) green, (6) yellow, (7) pink, (8) gray, (9) black, (10) brown.

1. The teacher pronounced each word three times: in isolation, in a sentence, and again in isolation.
2. Immediately following the pretest, the teacher spelled aloud and wrote each word on the chalkboard or used the overhead projector.
3. The target group wrote the corrected spelling in the column beside each misspelled word.
4. The target group counted the number of words spelled correctly and each student placed the pretest in individual spelling folders.

Tuesday - Modality-Based Activities

Visual Activity - Printing Set

Students used an ink pad and letter stamps to spell each word on white paper.

Auditory Activity - Spelling Bingo

Students wrote each spelling word in a space on a bingo card. The teacher drew spelling words from cards face down. Students covered each word drawn. The first student to have bingo won.

Kinesthetic Activity - Graph Paper

Students wrote each letter of a spelling word in a one-inch square on graph paper. Students cut the squares apart. The word was re-assembled by pasting letters in correct order on a piece of manilla paper.

Wednesday - Computer Exercise

The teacher pronounced spelling words as the target group typed out each word on the computer. The teacher said the word, used the word in a sentence and said the word again.

Students self-corrected each word as the teacher spelled words aloud and wrote words on the chalkboard.

Students retyped misspelled words on the computer. The target group printed out the practice test for home study.

Thursday - Written Activity

The target group wrote stories, poems or creative sentences in journals.

Friday - Posttest

The teacher pronounced each word three times. The teacher said the word; used the word in a sentence; then said the word again. Students wrote each word.

The target group was tested on each of the spelling words written in the context or a sentence. Students were asked to recognize whether the word was spelled correctly or incorrectly.

The teacher graded the test. Students recorded performance grades on individual charts.

Students scoring 80 percent or higher on both tests received a certificate of recognition. Students scoring 100 percent on both tests were awarded a certificate and an extra recess.

Week 8

Monday - Pretest

The following spelling words were used: (1) car, (2) far, (3) arm, (4) farm, (5) star, (6) hard, (7) art, (8) part, (9) park, (10) dark.

Week 7 activities were repeated.

All five target students enjoyed the printing set center. Using the ink pad was a very grown-up activity. The writer

continued to integrate this activity, the graph paper activity, the writing and computer activities into the students' independent language arts periods. The writer as well as the students appeared much more relaxed and confident with the flexible time change. Due to an assembly, the spelling center activities had to be canceled for two days. The target students expressed disappointment in not being able to complete the centers. One student stated, "But when will we get to play at the spelling centers?"

The students continue to exhibit competitiveness not only in the final spelling scores each week, but also when writing original poems and writings. The writer observed each student seeking verbal praise, approval, and attention from the writer.

Week 9

Monday - Pretest

The teacher pronounced 10 words as the target students wrote the words. The words were written in columns with a column on the right for self-correcting procedures. The following spelling words were used: (1) chin, (2) chop, (3) much, (4) such, (5) each, (6) which, (7) when, (8) while, (9) why, (10) what.

1. The teacher pronounced each word three times: in isolation, in a sentence, and again in isolation.

2. Immediately following the pretest, the teacher spelled aloud and wrote each word on the chalkboard or used the overhead projector.
3. The target group wrote the corrected spelling in the column beside each misspelled word.
4. The target group counted the number of words spelled correctly and each student placed the pretest in individual spelling folders.

Tuesday - Modality-Based Activities

Visual Activity - Typewriter

Students typed each spelling word using the typewriter.

Auditory Activity - Rhyming Words

Students listened for similarities in words by writing real or nonsense rhyming words for each spelling word.

Kinesthetic Activity - Sand Writing

Using a pencil, students wrote each spelling word in sand. As the word was written, the student said the word aloud.

Wednesday - Computer Exercise

The teacher pronounced spelling words as the target group typed out each word on the computer. The teacher said the word, used the word in a sentence and said the word again.

Students self-corrected each word as the teacher spelled words aloud and wrote words on the chalkboard.

Students retyped misspelled words on the computer. The target group printed out the practice test for home study.

Thursday - Written Activity

The target group wrote stories, poems or creative sentences in journals.

Friday - Posttest

The teacher pronounced each word three times. The teacher said the word; used the word in a sentence; then said the word again. Students wrote each word.

The target group was tested on each of the spelling words written in the context or a sentence. Students were asked to recognize whether the word was spelled correctly or incorrectly.

The teacher graded the test. Students recorded performance grades on individual charts.

Students scoring 80 percent or higher on both tests received a certificate of recognition. Students scoring 100 percent on both tests were awarded a certificate and an extra recess.

Week 10

Monday - Pretest

The following spelling words were used: (1) or, (2) for, (3) fork, (4) born, (5) torn, (6) corn, (7) more, (8) store, (9) horse, (10) door.

Week 9 activities were repeated.

The teacher re-administered the attitude survey and recorded the scores.

At the end of week 10, the students still eagerly approached the assigned tasks at the spelling centers. Even though the students had experience on a computer keyboard, the typewriter activity seemed to arouse curiosity among all five target students. Many students had never used a manual typewriter and exhibited difficulty getting the paper lined up correctly, yet each student thoroughly enjoyed typing out the spelling words. The rhyming word activity blossomed when the students understood that the rhyming words could be nonsense words. Many students filled the paper with as many rhyming words as possible. The students found the sand writing activity much more successful when water was added to make a mud-like consistency. The words appeared clearly without the loose sand covering up the word before completely written.

## CHAPTER IV

## Results

The writer measured success by a comparison of the pretest and post spelling test and pretest and post spelling attitude survey test. The results were considered significant if successful attainment of two of the following three objectives occurred:

1. Sixty percent of the target group were to score at least 80 percent on the weekly spelling tests during implementation weeks 9 and 10 using a dictated list of 10 words taken from the spelling textbook.
2. Sixty percent of the target group were to recognize a misspelled word taken from the spelling list and used in the context of 10 given sentences 80 percent of the time, as measured by teacher scoring for weeks 9 and 10 of implementation using selected sentences as an evaluation tool.
3. Sixty percent of the target group were to demonstrate more positive attitudes toward spelling as evidenced by two additional positive responses on a teacher-made attitude survey on the approach to work and the student's personal feelings.

The first objective was not only met but far exceeded the original goal of the writer as proven when comparing the spelling list pretest results shown in Table 1 with the posttest results shown in Table 2. As verified by the spelling list posttest results in Table 2, 100 percent of the target group scored at least 80 percent on the weekly spelling tests using a dictated list of 10 words taken from the spelling textbook.

Table 1

Pretest Results
Number of Words Misspelled on
Weekly Spelling List Test

| Student # | Week #1 | Week #2 | Week #3 | Week #4 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 3 | 6 | 4 | 3 |
| 2 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 3 | 5 | 3 | 5 | 4 |
| 4 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 2 |
| 5 | 5 | 3 | 3 | 4 |
| Subtotals | 19 | 18 | 18 | 17 |
| Average # Missed | 3.8 | 3.6 | 3.6 | 3.4 |
| Average % Correct | 62 | 64 | 64 | 66 |

Average Grade Percentage Overall = 64

Table 2

Posttest Results
Number of Words Misspelled on
Weekly Spelling List Test
of 10 Dictated Words

| Student # | Posttest Week #9 | Posttest Week #10 |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | 0 | 0 |
| 2 | 0 | 0 |
| 3 | 0 | 0 |
| 4 | 0 | 2 |
| 5 | 0 | 0 |
| Subtotals | 0 | 2 |
| Average # Missed | 0 | .4 |
| Average % Correct = | 100% | 96% |

Average Grade Percentage Overall = 98%

The writer's second objective was met and surpassed as evidenced by comparing the weekly spelling context pretest results shown in Table 3 with the posttest results shown in Table 4. The weekly spelling context posttest results in Table 4 show that 100 percent of the target group recognized a misspelled word taken from the spelling list and used in the context of given sentences at least 80 percent of the time.

Table 3

Pretest Results
Number of Words Misspelled on
Weekly Spelling Context Test

| Student # | Week #1 | Week #2 | Week #3 | Week #4 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 5 | 2 | 3 |
| 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 5 |
| 3 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 2 |
| 4 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 |
| 5 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 4 |
| Subtotals | 14 | 19 | 17 | 17 |
| Average # Missed | 2.8 | 3.8 | 3.4 | 3.4 |
| Average % Correct | 72 | 62 | 66 | 66 |

Average Grade Percentage Overall = 66.5

Table 4

Posttest Results
Number of Words Misspelled on
Weekly Spelling Context Test

| Student # | Posttest Week #9 | Posttest Week #10 |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | 0 | 0 |
| 2 | 0 | 0 |
| 3 | 1 | 1 |
| 4 | 0 | 0 |
| 5 | 0 | 0 |
| Subtotals | 1 | 1 |
| Average # Missed | .2 | .2 |
| Average % Correct | 98% | 98% |

Average Grade Percentage Overall = 98%

When comparing the spelling attitude survey pretest results shown in Table 5 with the posttest results shown in Table 6, the final data proves that the writer met and exceeded the original third objective. The spelling attitude posttest survey in Table 6 shows that 100 percent of the target group demonstrated more positive attitudes toward spelling as evidenced by at least two additional positive responses on the teacher-made attitude survey, on the approach to work, and the students' personal feelings.

Table 5

Pretest Results
Spelling Attitude Survey Results

| Question | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Student | | | | | | | | | | | Average Score |
| 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1.1 |
| 2 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 1.4 |
| 3 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1.0 |
| 4 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1.2 |
| 5 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1.0 |
| Average Overall Score = | | | | | | | | | | | 1.1 |

Table 6

Posttest Results
Spelling Attitude Survey Results

| Question | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Student | | | | | | | | | | | Average Score |
| 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 2.1 |
| 2 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 3 | 3 | 2.5 |
| 3 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 2.4 |
| 4 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 2.9 |
| 5 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2.0 |
| Average Overall Score = | | | | | | | | | | | 2.4 |

The writer observed not only a significant improvement in spelling achievement, but also a significant improvement in attitudes toward spelling. The writer witnessed students taking pride in spelling accomplishments. A level of spelling consciousness had developed within each of the target students. Spelling had become purposeful in each student's life through the finished story, poem, or journal writing produced and published on the computer. The students focused from extrinsic rewards to the intrinsic values of spelling. Healthy competition evolved within each of the five target students.

Throughout the implementation period of this spelling program, the writer observed students developing independent study skills, exhibiting enthusiasm for the spelling task required and gaining a higher level of confidence in a subject area once thought to be boring and meaningless. The results of this spelling program far exceeded the criterion for success. All of the writer's objectives were successfully achieved by the target group. However, the success of this program clearly shows that spelling must have a meaningful and motivational purpose in students' daily work.

## CHAPTER V

## Recommendations

The spelling program was successfully implemented in a second grade classroom targeting only five students working one-half year below grade level in reading and language arts. The spelling program, developed by the writer, can be easily adapted to an entire classroom at any grade level. During the 10-week implementation period, the target students increased spelling achievement scores through the use of high interest modality-based centers, computers, and a whole language approach. Students not only improved spelling scores but developed independent study skills, increased self-confidence, and developed more positive attitudes about spelling.

The writer recommends the spelling program as an easy, highly motivational, and effective way to help students improve spelling achievement and improve attitudes.

The writer plans to continue the spelling program next year with the entire class and will invite other teachers to observe the program in action. The writer is willing to share the spelling program with the Curriculum Resource Teacher to be used as a strategy for at-risk students (dropout prevention). The results of this program will also be shared with the county Elementary Education Administrator and the county Language Arts Supervisor for

future inservice programs. A workshop will be organized by the writer to present the spelling program at a school staff meeting and the local county reading association. The writer plans to write an article based on the successful data of the program and send it to various instructional magazines and educational journals.

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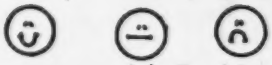
## APPENDIX A

### Spelling Attitude Survey

Put an X on the face that shows how you feel.

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Are you a good speller? | | | |
| 2. | Do you like the spelling book? |  | | |
| 3. | Do you like the way we practice our spelling words in the classroom? | | | |
| 4. | Do you like spelling homework? | | | |
| 5. | Do you like to help a friend with spelling? | | | |
| 6. | How do you feel when someone asks you how to spell a word? | | | |
| 7. | Do you like to write stories? | | | |
| 8. | How do you feel when you can't spell a word? | | | |
| 9. | Are the spelling bee competitions fun for you? | | | |
| 10. | Do you like other subjects that ask you to write and spell words? | | | |

## APPENDIX B

### Spelling Growth Chart

| | Weekly Pretest | Weekly Final Context Test | Weekly Final List Test |
|---|---|---|---|
| Week 1 | | | |
| Week 2 | | | |
| Week 3 | | | |
| Week 4 | | | |
| Week 5 | | | |
| Week 6 | | | |
| Week 7 | | | |
| Week 8 | | | |
| Week 9 | | | |
| Week 10 | | | |

## APPENDIX C

### Self-Correcting Column Paper

| | |
|---|---|
| 1. | 1. |
| 2. | 2. |
| 3. | 3. |
| 4. | 4. |
| 5. | 5. |
| 6. | 6. |
| 7. | 7. |
| 8. | 8. |
| 9. | 9. |
| 10. | 10. |

## APPENDIX D

### Spelling Context Test

| | | ANSWER BOX | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | Right | Wrong |
| 1. | Did the teacher shake your hannd? | 0 | 0 |
| 2. | I had to aske him for a ride home. | 0 | 0 |
| 3. | Is a ship the same as a boat? | 0 | 0 |
| 4. | Pat put the fan in the window. | 0 | 0 |
| 5. | John set the batt down in the grass. | 0 | 0 |
| 6. | I wear my cap to school. | 0 | 0 |
| 7. | He is sadd because his dog ran away. | 0 | 0 |
| 8. | That little baby has fat cheeks. | 0 | 0 |
| 9. | The girl could not find the missing mapp. | 0 | 0 |
| 10. | A kitten sat on the man's lap. | 0 | 0 |